5th September 1928]

(b) whether the system of contracting for the supply of stores to Government medical hospitals has been stopped ;

(c) if so, under what circumstances and on what grounds ; and

(d) how the stores are now obtained, from whom and wherefrom?

A.—(i) & (ii) It is assumed that by "medical and other stores" the hon. Member means drugs, dressings, instruments and appliances. Until 1927-28 these articles were obtained from the Government Medical Store Depot, Madras. Articles which were not available there were obtained through the Store Department of the India Office, London. The system of contracting for the supply of these stores has been started only during the current year in respect of two hospitals in Madras and four hospitals in the mufassal and no conclusion can yet be deduced from the experiment.

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"May I know wherefrom the Medical Store Depot gets its supplies ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"The Government have no information."

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—"May I ask the hon. the Minister whether he is aware that tenders are called for for the articles required by the Medical Depot and whether it is a fact that the offer of a local firm that used to supply cotton to Government hospitals before, at annas 12 per pound was rejected and that the Government accepted another tender at Rs. 2 per lb. from a foreign firm ? And what is the amount that is lost by the Government by accepting the latter tender and rejecting the former."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"Last year ?"

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—"Yes."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"I am not aware of that."

Mr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—"I am sorry I have to ask him for this information and as a Member of the Government he ought to have paid some attention to this question. This question was ventilated in the Press and we were given to understand that Government stood to lose nearly Rs. 50,000 by this transaction. I want to know whether that system is going to be encouraged and whether it is also the present policy of the Government ?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—"If there is any real grievance, I am quite prepared to enquire into the matter."

Training given to assistant surgeons sent to Edinburgh hospitals.

* 153 *Q.*—Mr. A. B. SHETTY : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether many of the assistant surgeons who are given study leave go to the Edinburgh hospitals ; and

(b) whether the Government have information that no coaching or practical training of any sort is given to them there, except that of watching cases from a distance ?